

## **COLUSA COUNTY**

### **2008 WMA Base Funding Work Plan**

#### **Colusa County Department of Agriculture Member of CGT WMA**

Purple Starthistle Control and Eradication Program

*January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009*

**Contract Lead Group (County RCD or Other) and contact information:**

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**WMA Group affiliation:** Colusa-Glenn-Tehama WMA (A Three County WMA Group)

**Please Confirm, All projects described in this work plan will be in one contract with (if more than one contract is desired, please describe here):** Confirmed, 1 contract with Colusa County Department of Agriculture.

## **Project Title: Control and Eradication of Purple Starthistle in Western Colusa County Foothills**

**Project Objective:** To control and/or eradicate purple star thistles (PST) on private lands. The largest is in the western foothills of Colusa County and is located 6 miles north of the town of Sites in 3 areas. The two other infestations are located 10 and 20 miles south of Sites. The largest location is on the Peterson Ranch and encompasses approximately an area of 300 gross acres (190 acres net) that are infested. We have had Glenn County Ag Dept assist in spraying because the infestation goes into their county as well. This will be in kind work for this project. The next location (site 2) is downstream 2 miles at the edges of Funks Creek and the Funks Reservoir (approx 8 acres). This site is on both sides of Funks Creek just before it enters the reservoir. A small infestation (.5 acres) which is all but eradicated is south of the Peterson place about 2 miles on Phil Site's Ranch. We also have a 60 (15 acres net) acre area that has PST south of Williams on Spring Valley road. This site we will utilize the California Cons. Corps crew from the State to dig up PST plants in the aquatic areas we don't want to spray. This labor is in kind. Lastly, there is a 12 acre outlier population of PST located on Standard road, 10 miles south of the main project areas. It is getting to where eradication is possible in the next year or so. In all of these locations we have had success in knocking down the population of PST. Colusa County Department of Agriculture will coordinate efforts to control and eradicate purple star thistle by intensive spraying by air, if possible, with a licensed PCB and ground efforts by the county. This is a continuation of a multi-year project that was funded by SB 1740 and then by a forest service grant for the main infestation.

We have done helicopter applications as well as ground spraying at all of these locations and have seen successes on most years, depending on any summer rains that germinate PST seeds that are still dormant. This location is the largest and most established area of PST in the north state and poses a major threat to the demise of valuable livestock feed where it is located and its inevitable spread without any control measures.

### **Project Goals:**

Task 1). We will aggressively spray the PST located in Western Colusa County large and small infestations of the noxious plant. This area has Funks Creek that runs through it and is a literal highway for the PST to travel downstream. It has already spread downstream to the Funks Reservoir (approximately 2 miles) and we have been spraying there for control/eradication for several years and have had successes there in stopping the spread. Our activities to accomplish our goals are as follows:

- a. Pre spray monitoring of all sites to locate/plot the outlier populations of PST and the main infestation area/that will be sprayed.
- b. We will coordinate spraying by air with a Pest Control Business and the rancher to knockdown the main infestation area (Site 1) of the PST with Milestone and some 2, 4-D. Ground spraying will be done with ATV, pickup and by backpack on all outlier PST plants by certified Ag Biologists of Colusa County. Also, we will use the Calif. Cons. Corps crew to dig up PST plants on the Spring Valley site (Site 5) that is around an aquatic area. We will avoid spraying in the springtime when water flows. This will be in-kind hours, about 150 hour's total. We will continue to spray PST plants at locations 2, 3 and 4 by ground spraying with Milestone. There will also be in-kind hours for biologists spraying and supervising/monitoring by the assistant Ag Commissioner. Other in-kind hours are listed on the In-kind Fiscal Display.
- c. Detailed mapping of areas sprayed, materials used, application method and percentage controlled will be kept on record and GPS used when possible.
- d. We plan to monitor surrounding areas for detection to assure that all outlier populations are located, mapped, sprayed or pulled.
- e. We will continue to promote outreach and eradication to local ranchers, government agencies and the general public concerning the importance of detecting and the use of spray or other control methods of noxious weeds. Dirty Dozen pamphlets will be utilized for this task, as well as meeting with local ranchers and WMA partners.
- f. We will report at the completion of the project the net/gross acres that are treated or surveyed at all of the locations.

Task 2). Colusa County Department of Agriculture will increase our detection efforts to assure that no PST population exists beyond our project area. We will pursue additional surveys in cooperation with private land owners, government agencies and chemical manufacturers that are project partners. Colusa County Department of Agriculture staff will conduct detection and survey work prior to the spraying activities. All mapping of the PST project will be with topographic maps and GPS will be used also for pinpointing infestations.

